

The
AIMS
and
PRINCIPLES
of the
UNION OF
ANARCHIST GROUPS

Liberty without socialism means privilege and injustice.
Socialism without freedom means slavery and brutality.

—Bakunin.

One Penny

THE LONDON ANARCHIST GROUP (of the Union of Anarchist Groups).

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The Class Struggle and the State

Anarchists aim at a society without government or privilege. By this we mean, not the rule of chaos, but an integrated society of free co-operation, where equality of rights will be complete, where men will live peacefully in an environment based on mutual trust between individuals, and where the growth of a privileged class, and the exploitation and oppression of man by man will be rendered impossible. To this end, we advocate free access to the land, industry and all means of production and distribution, on the basis of voluntary co-operation.

Society in all countries to-day is divided into two classes, those who control the means of production and reap the profits of exploitation, and the workers who operate the means of production for the smallest wage their employers dare to pay. Between these two classes there is no interest in common, and so long as exploitation exists, struggle between them is inevitable. Therefore, while aiming at a classless society, we recognise the class struggle as an inevitable feature of contemporary society, and also as a necessary factor in the supersession of exploitation by freedom. For this reason, solidarity between workers, manual and intellectual, at home and abroad, is the funda-

mental necessity which must take precedence over all others.

The class division of society is crystallised in the State, which began and has always existed as an instrument for the protection of privilege. The state is the coercive superstructure of a property society which maintains, through its weapons of force (such as parliament, the bureaucracy, the legal system, the police, the armed forces, the Church) the domination and prosperity of the ruling class over the exploited workers. We are unalterably opposed to the state, and regard it as the principal enemy of the workers, because it exists only to protect the interests of a privileged minority, *e.g.* capitalists, landlords, bureaucrats. Even where private capitalism and landlordism are destroyed, as in Russia, the continued existence of the state preserves the class system and the institution of property.

To-day, with the totalitarian merging of political and economic power, the state is assuming a more dangerous and powerful form than ever before, and becoming even more ruthless in its control and exploitation. This is an inherent tendency in the state, which, instead of withering away, grows stronger the longer it is allowed to survive. Therefore, the state must be abolished, together with the system of property and all other means of exploitation, such as the wages system.

We oppose all forms of militarism, because the armed forces are used by the ruling class to maintain their domination, and because the military class is in itself a menace to all freedom.

Opposition to War and Nationalism

We oppose all national frontiers as obstacles to the natural aspirations of the workers. Against nationalism and imperialism, we call upon the workers to demonstrate their solidarity with each other by destroying the artificial barriers which enable the ruling classes to exploit their traditional method of divide-and-rule.

We oppose war as the outcome of the clashing interests of rival imperialisms. Since empires exist only to serve the interests of the ruling classes, wars undertaken for their extension or defence have nothing in common with the interests of the workers. The rivalries between the national sections of the ruling class should be utilised by the workers to their own advantage, by prosecuting the class struggle more vigorously instead of allowing themselves to be forced to shed their blood in the interests of their masters. Nationalist sentiment intensified by war is the most effective means employed by the ruling class to deceive the workers and conceal the underlying class struggle.

Methods of Struggle

The fight against domination can only be won by the direct action of the workers themselves on the economic field where they hold the decisive power. We reject all reformist or parliamentary methods, which merely play into the hands of the ruling class and divert the workers from the class struggle into fatal class collaboration.

Since direct action on the part of the individual produces only partial and inadequate results, it is necessary for the working class to organise collectively. We therefore aim at the organisation of the workers into anarcho-syndicalist unions free from the craft divisions and bureaucracy of trade unions. While trade unions seek to be permanent wage-bargaining institutions, anarcho-syndicalism fights for the abolition of the wages system, and the destruction of the property-relations of existing society. To do this, the workers should organise at the places of work, and the workshop committees should be federated into industrial syndicates.

These industrial syndicates will play the dual role of providing a means of revolutionary activity and, together with the communes (*i.e.* organisations according to residential locality), of forming the voluntary institutions on which the free society will be built.

The industrial syndicates will be able to control each industry when the workers have locked out the employing class, and will administer production and distribution on behalf of the community. All industries will then co-operate in a Federation of Labour, co-ordinating the whole economy of society. Production will be freed from wage slavery and profit-seeking, and the whole energies of labour will be directed towards the satisfaction of human needs.

The Organisation of Society

The communes, by which men will organise themselves in streets, villages and towns, and federate into regions, according to their dwellings places, will fulfil the local and municipal needs of men, and similarly many other voluntary organisations will undoubtedly arise for providing co-operatively the amenities of life.

There will be no capitalism, no State, no domination of man by man. The governing of human beings will have been replaced by the administration of goods and services to satisfy our needs. Against government, will be erected free co-operation; against subjection, the freedom of the individual limited only by a willing regard for his fellows; against legal codes, religious dogma and conventional morality, the unlimited

power for creative activity of the free human personality.

To-day the old social structures are passing away, forms of power are changing, and the conflict of giant states seems to be driving humanity to a new dark age of brutality and want. It is for the revolutionary workers to gather their scattered forces, to declare their unity across the frontiers, and, taking advantage of their economic power, to destroy authority and build in its place the free society of ANARCHY.

These Aims and Principles were agreed upon by the assembled delegates at the Congress of the Union of Anarchists Groups at Glasgow, December 2-3, 1945.

Does all this sound like the babbling of a madman?

Or does it show that Anarchism is not a thoughtless creed of destruction, but a sane, constructive philosophy of Freedom, holding up before the people, disillusioned with political parties, a vision of a society at once ideal and attainable?

But no-one is going to give us our freedom on a plate! If we want a decent society, free from want and the fear of war, we have got to get together on the lines indicated here, prepared to work and fight for the one thing above all worth fighting for—our own liberation!



*Is this how **YOU** think of Anarchists?*

If so, we would respectfully suggest to you that you have been fooled by the propaganda of those with an axe to grind—those who, for one reason or another, are interested in keeping from you the truth about Anarchism.

These include not only financiers and big business men, the officer class and the aristocracy, the press lords, the lawyers and the church and, above all, the government, but also those so-called left wing politicians and Union leaders who pretend to represent you. Remember that all these have in some degree privileged positions and are more interested in securing those positions than helping you to attain a condition of equality, freedom and a full share of the good things of life.

We don't pretend to be able to give you these things. But we think you have a right to know the truth about Anarchism as about everything else, and sincerely hope you will give serious thought in these serious times to what we believe is the solution to most of our problems.

If you have been interested by the ideas expressed in these Aims and Principles, you will find them developed more fully in the columns of

FREEDOM

through Anarchism

the Anarchist fortnightly paper.

Articles explaining the various aspects of Anarchist theory; historical articles outlining the growth of the libertarian movement; articles giving the revolutionary workers' point of view; articles exposing the trickery of T.U. bosses and politicians, together with drawings and cartoons make this paper invaluable to the worker who would under-

stand his position in society—what it is and what it could be.

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(William Godwin, Kropotkin, Bakunin, Malatesta, etc.) and an album of cartoons (*The March to Death*) carried to thousands in vivid and graphic form the Anarchist case against war and capitalism.

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